

ABSTRACT

5 A surgical sponge comprises a radiopaque marker having a high radiographic density and a distinctive, visually recognizable shape. The marker has an x-ray density equivalent to at least about 0.1 g/cm² of BaSO₄. It produces an x-ray image with high contrast and a shape that is readily recognizable and differentiated from the images produced by other items and structures commonly seen in x-rays of post-operative patients. Owing to the distinctive, high
10 contrast image produced by the marker, the sponge is reliably and unambiguously detected. This is so even in situations where the sponge is inadvertently left in the surgical wound. Discomfort, trauma, and possibly fatal consequences that might otherwise occur are virtually eliminated. The surgical procedure is carried out with decreased likelihood of a sponge being retained inadvertently.